

REMARKS

Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-12, 14, 15, 17-19, and 21-28 are now pending. Of these, claims 1-11, 14, and 22-27 are withdrawn from consideration. Of the claims under consideration, claims 12, 15, 21, and 28 are independent and have been amended. Support for the amendments can be found throughout the originally-filed disclosure. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the amendments do not include new matter.

Claims 12, 15, 17-19, 21, and 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over JP Document No. 2002-016812 (Yoshida et al.) in view of U.S. Patent Nos. 5,868,279 (Funamizu et al.) and 5,289,570 (Suzuki). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As recited in independent claim 12, Applicant's invention is directed to an image forming apparatus which has an image repeat function capable of performing a layout process to arrange plural same data in first and second directions. A first accepting unit accepts, from a user, a number of the same data repeatedly arranged in the first direction independently of a number of the same data repeatedly arranged in the second direction. Similarly, a second accepting unit accepts, from a user, the number repeatedly arranged in the second direction independently of the number repeatedly arranged in the first direction.

Further, for each image forming job, a selecting unit selects a first layout mode or a second layout mode. The first layout mode arranges adjacent same data of the number accepted for the first direction with at least one interval, and adjacent same data of the

number accepted for the second direction with at least one interval. The second layout mode arranges the adjacent same data without an interval.

Independent claims 15, 21, and 28 recite features generally similar to those discussed above with respect to independent claim 12.

Yoshida et al. describes a color facsimile apparatus. The Office Action asserts that Yoshida et al. describes determining the number of data to be arranged in first and second directions on the basis of the size of the received image and the size of the recording paper to be used. However, as generally acknowledged in the Office Action, Yoshida et al. does not describe independently accepting, from a user, respective numbers of the same data to be repeatedly arranged in the first and second directions (although the Office Action asserts that Yoshida et al. does so for the first direction). Furthermore, while providing a cutoff line between adjacent data, Yoshida et al. does not provide an interval between the arranged data.

The Office Action asserts that Funamizu et al. describes the features of the second accepting unit/step of the present invention. In particular, the Office Action states that system of Funamizu et al. accepts from a user a number of data to be arranged in a second direction.

Applicant submits that Funamizu et al. describes a copying machine that accepts 2-in-1, 4-in-1, 8-in-1, etc. settings from a user for a reduced layout mode. However, such settings do not result in the arrangement of the same data repeatedly, but simply arrange different originals. Further, such settings do not allow a user to arrange a number of the same data repeatedly a first direction and a number of the same data repeatedly in a second direction, independently of each other.

Applicant acknowledges that Funamizu et al. indicates that A4 and A3 originals are read and the order of the originals can be set according to a user's instructions. Even in such a case, however, the data to be arranged on a recording paper is not repeated data, but different originals. Thus, Funamizu et al. does not suggest independently accepting from a user a number of the same data to be repeatedly arranged in a first direction and a number to be repeatedly arranged in a second direction. In addition, Funamizu et al. does not suggest that first and second layout modes of the present invention for arranging adjacent data with intervals.

Consequently, Funamizu et al. does not remedy the deficiencies of Yoshida et al. discussed above.

The Office Action relies on Suzuki as allegedly describing the formation of intervals in accordance with the present invention. Nevertheless, that document does not suggest independently accepting from a user numbers of same data to be arranged in first and second directions, as discussed above. Thus, Suzuki does not remedy the deficiencies of the other applied references.

Furthermore, with respect to the formation of intervals between repeated data, the present invention describes different modes in which an interval is or is not provided. Suzuki merely describes that a boundary region is provided and that a user may adjust that boundary region. Suzuki does not suggest an option of not providing a boundary region as in the present invention. Furthermore, Suzuki does not suggest providing an interval between adjacent *same* data as in the present invention.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant's submits that Yoshida et al., Funamizu et al., and Suzuki, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest, at least, the features

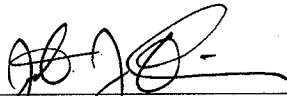
of accepting, from a user, a number of the same data repeatedly arranged in a first direction independently of a number of same data repeatedly arranged in a second direction; accepting, from a user, the number of the same data repeatedly arranged in the second direction independently of the number of the same data repeatedly arranged in the first direction; selecting a first layout mode or a second layout mode, (1) the first layout mode being that, in an image repeat function, adjacent same data of the number accepted by the first accepting unit/step are arranged in the first direction with at least one interval, and adjacent same data of the number accepted by the second accepting unit/step are arranged in the second direction with at least one interval, and (2) the second layout mode being that, in the image repeat function, the adjacent same data of the number accepted by the first accepting unit/step are arranged in the first direction without an interval, and the adjacent same data of the number accepted by the second accepting unit/step are arranged in the second direction without an interval, as generally recited in the independent claims.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that independent claims 12, 15, and 21 define over the applied art. The remaining claims in the present application are dependent claims which depend from the independent claims discussed above and, thus, are allowable for the same reasons. Of course, favorable and independent consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 and allowance of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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